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The Cheerful Letter

Every place a church; every day the Lord's day; all events blessings; all joy thanksgiving; and all nature and life full of Good.—James Freeman Clarke.

Vol. XLVI NOVEMBER, 1937 No. 5

PSALM 100

A Psalm of Thanksgiving

Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands.

Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing.

Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves: we are his people and the sheep of his pasture.

Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him and bless his name.

For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.

THE SILENT DUTY

"What doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God." Micah 6:8.

EVERY time we hear those familiar words we discover some new meaning in them. Let us notice especially that there is no mention of what we are to say. It is a distinct relief to have all the voluble side of human behaviour ignored. We are grateful to this excellent Micah: he has given us a formula of acceptable living which we can fulfill without once opening our mouths—a silent duty. Such a formula is welcome. When we stop to realize that our civilization is garrulous to the last extreme. We recall Philip's comment in Shakespeare's play, King John—"Never was I so bethumped with words since first I called my brother's father Dad."

Of course ideas are the real forces in life—and words are the medium of exchange for ideas. But words in our civilization are as thick as confetti at a Mardi Gras Festival, and about as ineffective. We wade ankle deep in a slush of dead words. They have neutralized each other and fallen to the ground. It is high time we began to express our life less in words and more in silences; less in talk, and more in quiet thought, secret affection, private reverence: that is to say—less in outward protesting, and more in simple being. And so we turn to Micah with a sense of relief. What doth the Lord require of thee? He does not require thee to say a single thing. He requires thee to do justly, to love mercy, to walk humbly with thy God.

One of those duties speaks to us of this day and generation with especial point and insistence. It is the central one—what doth the Lord require of thee but to love mercy? What doth the Lord require of thee but to love that whole class of beauties and graces of which mercy is the type and representative? As we would put it in our own idiom—what doth the Lord require of thee but to be right-minded and right-hearted in our secret affections and desires? If any one of the three duties needs to be emphasized to us more than the other, this is the one. For it is the one we most easily forget, and the one we can least afford to forget. It is the foundation of all our happiness and well-being in this world.

What doth the Lord require of us but to be generous, magnanimous, benevolent, sympathetic, and right-minded! That is an absolutely silent duty. It requires no spoken word, it involves no outward or overt action. It is the kind of duty that may be performed in the secret and intimate places of the heart, and not another soul need be the wiser. It is a duty of just being—never mind the words and the deeds, but just be that kind of a man,

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generous, magnanimous, benevolent, sympathetic, and right-minded—the kind of man who loves mercy.

To tell the truth, that kind of a duty does not especially appeal to us. We say with apparent justice, what is the sense of being that kind of a man inside, if no one is to know it, and if no token of that inward quality is to appear outwardly? Such an objection is to be expected of human nature, and it is to be expected from us, of this hurrying, breathless, touch-and-go day and generation. We judge by appearances; we have no time for closer investigation. We appraise a man by what he says and does: we have no business to inquire what he is. Shakespeare says that a man may smile and smile and be a villain. Very well—so long as he smiles and smiles, he is welcome to be all the villain he pleases. After all, is it not the smiles that count in our human traffic? And if his inward villainy shows itself in outward smiles, what right have we to complain?

When harvest time comes on our western wheat fields, the farmer drives out into the wheat with his reaper, an ingenious device called a header. It is a mowing machine with the knife bar set up at such a height from the ground that it takes off only the heads of the wheat, and leaves the straw standing. After all, the heads of the wheat are what we want. We drive our judgment across the fields of human living like a header, and we gather into our judgment only the fruits of human living, the words and actions, the practical results. We pay no attention to the stalks and roots. We assume that if the results are good, the stalks and roots must have been good. If a man's spoken words and outward conduct are acceptable his inner springs of conduct, his secret motives, affections, and qualities must be good.

That sounds like a piece of water tight reasoning, but the trouble is that it takes no account of the law of delayed results which operates so universally not only in the physical but in the moral and spiritual realm. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him. But between the time of weeping when the farmer prepares his ground and sows the seed, and the time of joy when he gathers the harvest, there is a period of six or eight or ten weeks. Today's wheat harvest is not the result of today's causes: it is the result of causes that were set into operation three months ago. The momentum of a ship like the *Queen Mary* is so great that when her helm is turned she will slide along on her old course for a mile or two before she answers the helm. We may call it momentum, we may call it the law of deferred results, but we find it at work even in the field of human conduct and manners. The spoken words, the outward actions that we find entirely acceptable, are not only the result of what that man is in his secret heart—they are partly the result of what his father was.

Here is a bit of teaching which Christ tried repeatedly to bring home to his hearers, but with indifferent success. And what it comes to is this: what human nature is, secretly and inwardly, will sooner or later determine what it does outwardly. What a man is, in the silence of his being, will eventually manifest itself in his spoken words and outward actions.

Our argument is that if spoken words are fair and outward acts are acceptable, inward motives and qualities may safely be taken for granted. Christ's argument was that if inward motives and qualities are right, the spoken words and outward acts will take care of themselves. There-

fore, lay a good foundation—cleanse the inside of the cup and the platter—first make the tree good. What doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God? What doth the Lord require of thee but to be generous, magnanimous, benevolent, sympathetic, right-minded—to be the right kind of man in the inviolate silence of thy inward nature.

There are grounds to surmise that with all his activities and solicitudes Christ saw no task so important as this silent duty stated by the Prophet Micah. And there are grounds to suppose that in the bitterness which darkened his last days on earth the chief item was the sense of having failed to teach people this silent duty. He had spent his days striving to reveal Our Heavenly Father to his children, and striving to reveal to those children their own possibilities, that they were children of a Heavenly Father. It was the misgiving that his efforts had failed which filled his cup of sorrow.

Remembering this we ask ourselves—What then is the use? Where Christ failed how can we succeed? We may agree that here is the most urgent task in the world, but is it not also the most difficult, the most elusive, the most hopeless? It would be, were it not for that Cross of Christ which towers o'er the wrecks of time—that sublime act of self-surrender to a great faith and a great love. No task that has required and received such a sacrifice can be hopeless. There is one spot at which it is not hopeless—ourselves. We may not convince others—we can convince ourselves. And having convinced ourselves, we shall help others to the same enlightenment. The world does not need pacts and treaties and trade agreements—it needs men and women of good will—Christlike men and women—it needs men and women who have fulfilled their silent duty, and have made themselves God's Free People at their beginnings, in their silences. In that fulfillment all problems are solved, all victories are won, and all hopes are fulfilled.

—Charles E. Park, D.D.

AM I THANKFUL?

I wonder if I'm thankful for the blessings that God sends.
Am I thankful for my health, my home and all my loving friends;
Am I thankful for my other self I've known for years as wife;
Am I thankful for the children who'll perpetuate my life;
Am I thankful for the food I eat and raiment that I wear;
Am I thankful for the joys of life and happiness I share;
Am I thankful for the birds and trees and sunny, smiling skies;
Am I thankful for the books I read, the ripe fruits of the wise?

I wonder if I'm thankful for the life which I possess.
Am I thankful that my soul is never steeped in bitterness;
Am I thankful for the work I find each weekday must be done;
Am I thankful for the hope that's mine of honors to be won;
Am I thankful for the tears I shed of sorrow and of pain;
Am I thankful for each small success my humblest efforts gain;
Am I thankful for inspiring thoughts which elevate the mind;
Am I thankful that I'm human and like others of my kind?

If I am not, oh grant, dear God, that in Thy holy way
Thou wilt implant into my soul a real Thanksgiving day;
Oh, teach me how to show my thanks for all which Thou dost give,
That I may in the future years a thankful spirit live. Amen.

—Charles L. H. Wagner.

"When things first got to goin' wrong with me, I says, 'Oh, Lord, whatever comes, keep me from gettin' sour!' Since then I've made it a practice to put all my worries down in the bottom of my heart, then set on the lid an' smile."

—Mrs. Wiggs.

CORRESPONDENTS AND APPEALS

Letters should be addressed to Mrs. Laura M. Hurst, 78 Penfield Street, Roslindale, Mass.

Persons writing to the Department for the first time should ask for an enrollment blank and give as reference the name and address of their minister.

When a correspondent moves to a new address, notice should be sent to Headquarters, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass., and to those persons who have been sending letters and reading matter.

It is necessary to state positively that the Cheerful Letter Exchange is not a "clothing bureau" and not a "charitable" society in the usual sense of the word.

It is contrary to the rules of the Cheerful Letter Exchange to allow any one to make use of its magazine by addressing letters asking for money, clothing, or other articles, to those whose names are printed in the paper. This prohibition includes requests to borrow money and the offering of articles for sale. The name of any person who disobeys this rule will be dropped from the list, and any one who receives a request of this description is desired by the Central Committee to return no answer, but to enclose the letter at once to the Chairman of this Department.

Many people do care for just the kind of friendly service for which we are organized. We limit our efforts to them and their wishes.

CHEERFUL LETTER WORKERS

When sending your monthly *Cheerful Letter* to your *regular correspondent*, it is suggested that you include a picture or story of the first Thanksgiving in this country. Also try to send the children of the family Thanksgiving postcards or favors. These small additions to the regular letter are very welcome and it means so much to the little ones when the postman leaves something for them.

Once again comes our annual opportunity of preparing Christmas boxes for *regular correspondents* or for an Appeal listed in the November or December Magazine. The Exchange recommends this custom, and for the first time publishes a list of suggestions on page 58, which comes under the province of *Cheerful Letter*. We think this list will be of great service to workers in collecting for the Christmas packages.

The Appeals are particularly heavy at this time of year and in order that every *Cheerful Letter* family may be remembered during the holiday season we ask you to write this Department if your local committee feels it can take care of one or two more shut-ins.

CORRESPONDENTS

These *regular correspondents* may be adopted after postcard consultation with Mrs. Laura M. Hurst, 78 Penfield Street, Roslindale, Mass. This is important and it should be done in order to avoid duplication in arranging for *regular correspondents*.

1. Mrs. Louise C. Evans, 309 Sycamore St., Greensboro, N. C., is 31 years old and has one girl, age 7. Her husband has just passed away and she seeks a regular correspondent to cheer her up a bit.

2. Mrs. A. C. Coleman, Route 2, Box 83A, Madison Heights, Va., is 70 years old and lives with her only son. She is looking for cheer in the way of a correspondent and hopes to hear soon. Her leisure time is spent in sewing, so some embroidery work would be quite a luxury.

3. I would like a correspondent to write to. I have a three year old daughter and I hope you will not forget her at Christmas time. My husband hasn't had a steady job for a long while and has to depend on a day's work wherever he can find it. Whoever adopts me, I hope will

try to collect some quilt pieces for me. We need new quilts badly and I am willing to make them. Mrs. Ruby Henderson, Dayton, Tenn.

4. I am 30 years old and the mother of five children, ages 1 to 10. My health has been very bad since we lost our Daddy last March. Life seems dull and blue and I hope a regular correspondent will cheer us up a whole lot. Christmas is coming and I won't be able to do much for the children so I leave it with some good lady to drop us a line and send me a little sewing material. Mrs. Myrtle Rowland, Chilhowie, Va.

5. Miss Colen L. Beachum, R. 1, Box 130, Peachland, N. C., is greatly interested in the Cheerful Letter Exchange. She is a shut-in most of the time due to an aged mother. They think a friendly correspondence would bring a little sunshine into their home and they look forward to a monthly letter and any good reading.

6. I am 57 years old and have nine children, ages 13 to 32; seven boys and two girls, with just four boys at home. My husband has been dead for six years and you can imagine how lonesome I get. It occurred to me that correspondence with some friendly woman would cheer me very much, so I hope I am listed in the Magazine under "Correspondents." My days are spent in farming and I can tell you it is hard work. Mrs. L. W. Richardson, Box 126, Rugby, Va.

7. Mrs. Ella E. Mizell, Crabtree, Ark., is 37 years old and has four children, ages 1 to 6; two boys and two girls. She asks for a correspondent and something for the children at Christmas time. Her letters to the Department have been very interesting, and the worker who takes her for a correspondent should include a stamped envelope for her return answer.

APPEALS

These Appeals need not be answered a second time and we ask you not to take them as a *regular correspondent* no matter how appealing the acknowledgment is for the package. For any exception please address this Department.

1. Miss Ada Smith, Stuart, Va., writes that life seems to hold nothing good for her. She is a semi-invalid having a sore foot that has not healed for three years. She and her 78-years old father are alone most of the time and both are eager for good reading. Also quilt scraps would come in very handy.

2. It has been a long time since I have written to the Cheerful Letter Exchange but I have been a reader of the little paper for quite a few years. I am the mother of eight children, six of them at home and four going to school; two girls, ages 6 and 12, and two boys, ages 6 and 9. You can see I am kept rather busy. The canning season is just about over and I am wondering if some of the members would send me some quilt materials and flour and sugar sacks. Just any kind will do. Also it would be a favor if the children could be remembered at Christmas time. Mrs. Ader Hart, Husk, N. C.

3. Mrs. Lydia Jones is a widow, 51 years old, and has four children at home, two boys and two girls. Ever since she fell and broke her leg a year ago she has not been able to do a great deal. Her family are church members but not always able to attend services. They would love some religious literature and any other good reading for a grown-up family. Her address is Rugby, Va.

4. Miss June Hill, Dabney, Ark., is 17 years old and lives in the mountains, forty-five miles from a railroad town. Her mother has been a member of the Exchange for several years. June gets very lonely at times and is a great reader so she has been recommended to the Exchange as one who would welcome any good literature.

5. I am a girl 13 years old and my parents are very poor. I don't have much like other girls and it would make me so happy if someone would send me some sewing or embroidery work. Christmas time is drawing near and I hope I won't be forgotten. Miss Artie Parks, Grant, Va.

6. I am a widow, 62 years old. My husband died in 1931 and I have been living with my children, first one and then

another. It seems like I am lost since I gave up my own home. The best companion I have is my Bible. When you are as old as I am it is not easy to walk to church so I am writing to you folks to see if you will send me some reading and quilt scraps to pass away the lonely hours. Mrs. Alice Looper, Crabtree, Ark.

7. I am lonely and sad since my husband went away. He is a world war veteran, wounded and gassed, and is in a Government Hospital now. My mother and father are dead and my only sister lives far away. Not having any children, I get a little lonely. I am 34 years old and live in a railroad city. Do you suppose some interested worker would send me some reading matter? Mrs. Bessie Mae Neal, 515 Shenandoah Ave., N. W., Roanoke, Va.

NOTICE

The Brookline (First Parish) branch will send packages of old Christmas cards to those desiring them. Address, Miss Martha Suter, Sherborn, Mass.

LIST OF SUGGESTIONS FOR CHRISTMAS AND OCCASIONAL GIFTS TO CORRESPONDENTS

Books, School Helps, Stationery

- Anniversary Cards
- Bible
- Books, adults' and children's
- Calendars
- Christmas Carols—free copies
- Crayons
- Dictionary
- Erasers
- Loose-leaf Notebook
- Magazines and continued stories cut from several issues
- Music
- Paste
- Pens
- Pencils
- Picture Postcards
- Pictures
- Scrapbooks and material to make them
- Writing Paper

Miscellaneous

- Aprons
- Bags, all kinds
- Beads
- Bulbs
- Candy
- Christmas Tree Ornaments
- Coin Purses
- Flower and Vegetable Seeds
- Games
- Jigsaw Puzzles
- Paper Napkins
- Paper Tablecloths for special occasions
- Ribbons
- Toys

Sewing Material

- Buttons
- Crochet Cotton
- Crochet Hooks
- Crochet Patterns
- Embroidery Floss
- Lace
- Knitting Needles
- Needles
- Patterns—secondhand
- Pins
- Quilt Scraps
- Safety Pins
- Scissors
- Sewing Book
- Snap Fasteners
- Stamped Pieces
- Sugar and Salt Bags
- Tape Measure
- Thimbles
- Thread
- Work-basket or Box to keep sewing material in
- Yarn

Toiletries

- Comb
- Handkerchiefs
- Nail File
- Perfume
- Pocket Mirror
- Soap
- Talcum Powder
- Tooth Brush
- Tooth Paste

Much of this material may be secondhand—but in good condition.

NOVEMBER'S BRIGHT DAYS

AUTUMN is a very pretty time of the year. The foliage of the trees is every color of the rainbow. There are the bright yellow hickory leaves, the dark red black gum, and the cool dark green of the pines towering above their lower neighbors. The maple with its new fall dress varying in color from blood red to lemon yellow, the dainty elm with its bright yellow leaves, the sumac with its red fern-shaped leaves, and the sassafras with leaves of red and yellow are clustered near a background of dark green cedars, with a rich brown oak scattered here and there. Sometimes a beautiful bunch of goldenrod or lavender daisies is found in some sheltered nook.

Tiny leaf-boats go sailing on the crystal clear water of the noisy little brook as it runs laughing and gurgling on its way between banks that are blanketed with leaves of beautifully blended colors.

The little birds pause in their journey southward, to feed and rest. They fill the air with their cheery songs.

In the fields are shocks of corn with big yellow pumpkins lying around them. The hay has been cut and stacked, leaving the brown stubble to protect the smaller creatures from the winter cold as they hunt for a seed or grain or a warm place to sleep.

Over the entire land rests a spirit of calmness and rest. All about is the evidence of a summer's work well done.

—*Beatrice Henderson,*
Copeland, Arkansas
(*A Home Study Pupil*)

MID-WINTER AWAKENING

A. DAWES DU BOIS

ALTHOUGH many animals sleep through the winter, one does not often see them in their burrows and dens. Hence I count my discovery of a "gopher" (Richardson Ground Squirrel) in hibernation as a novel experience in a relatively obscure field of inquiry.

I found the nest late in October at a depth of 69 inches, in subsoil so hard as to require pick and shovel in digging. The nest was lined with about an inch of fine dried grass, well matted together. It occupied a nearly spherical cavity in the earth about six inches in diameter; the entrance tunnel had been nearly closed.

When the nest was opened, the animal was curled into a ball with head bent down beneath the body, and tail curled under the body and lapping around the head. His eyes were tightly closed. He was cold to the touch. Except for occasional perceptible movement, he remained as motionless as though dead. On his back and side were five large ticks, their bodies projecting through the fur. With a pair of forceps I pulled off the ticks. This required such severe jerking as nearly to lift the ground squirrel bodily. He objected with a slight hissing sound, but showed no further signs of waking.

I lifted the squirrel out of the nest and put him in the warm sunshine, protected from the wind. He lay there for about an hour, then began to sway from side to side, trembling and endeavoring to get to his feet. His eyes remained tightly closed.

I put him into a box filled with rags while I ate my lunch. After lunch he was able to move around; he opened his eyes slightly; and when I lifted him by the nape he opened his mouth and hissed. When I put him back into the nest chamber, he crawled about, trying to re-shape the nest—his first purposeful act since waking. Soon his eyes were wide open and he was able to run about on the bottom of the pit.

The chance presence of a weasel, his arch enemy, did not appear to disturb him. As I looked out from my nearby cabin, the weasel came to the edge of the pit, looked down at the squirrel, and made a start as if to crawl down the vertical wall. The squirrel sat motionless on the floor of the pit, quite aware of his enemy, but making no attempt to flee.

Later, when I looked again, the squirrel was wide awake and active. He was digging a tunnel downward from the old nest, and had progressed about four inches into the hard earth, obviously intent on resuming the profound sleep from which nature had not meant him to be disturbed.

—*Condensed from Natural History.*

THE SAGA OF JOHNNY APPLESEED

WILLIAM ATHERTON DUPUY

THE quaintest of all frontier heroes was Johnny Appleseed, that strange wraith of a man who flitted through the border country for half a century, planting apple trees in advance of the coming settlers so that they and their children might have fruit. His real name was Jonathan Chapman, his early home had been Massachusetts; beyond this he never revealed the story of his life nor what led him to his strange calling.

His first recorded appearance was in 1801, when, a slim, 25-year-old youth, he turned up in Licking County, Ohio, leading a packhorse loaded down with appleseed gathered from cider mills in Pennsylvania. At many places along Licking Creek he cleared plots where the sun was bright and the soil rich. There in neat rows close together he planted appleseed, each plot forming a nursery from which many orchards would spring when the settlers came that way.

In 1806 he appeared floating down the Ohio in a strange craft consisting of two boats lashed together. Soon he was starting nurseries all along the Muskingum River, White Woman Creek, the Mohican and up its Black Fork to the very head of navigation—no small journey for one man pushing two lashed boats against the current. Then on foot, bearing his seed bags on his back, he followed old Indian trails, planting hillside nurseries throughout this beautiful country.

Soon his early plantings began to bear fruit, doing away with the long tramp back to Pennsylvania for seed. But the far-flung nurseries must be tended; the replanting of the young trees for the rapidly arriving settlers must be supervised. The nurseries must be pushed way up to the Lake in the north; the red man must be taught to cultivate apple trees. So Johnny Appleseed was always on the move.

About now he began to develop the peculiarities that marked his 46 years of service in the West. Man, he came to believe, should be clothed only to conceal his nakedness—not for comfort. So he discarded his homespun suit and coonskin cap and wore a coffee sack with holes cut in it for head and arms; for a long time he wore his stew kettle for a hat. Usually, even in cold weather, he went barefoot; when his legs were lacerated from brambles he seared his wounds with a hot iron, an example of fortitude that won him the highest respect from the Indians. Thus he became a fantastic figure that flitted through the forest, long-haired and scraggly-bearded, now camping in the wilderness, now staying with Indians, now sleeping for a night on the hearth of some settler.

Many frontiersmen had lived in the wilderness before, subsisting mainly upon game. But this John the Baptist of the apples never owned a rifle. He ate no meat, believing it a sin to kill any of God's creatures. He lived chiefly on cornmeal mush and berries. There were wild beasts in these forests—bears, wolves, droves of ferocious wild hogs, deadly rattlesnakes—yet this defenseless wanderer passed among them through the decades without fear of attack.

The seed planter always carried a book or two, usually the teaching of Emanuel Swedenborg, Swedish mystic who advocated the "negation of egoism." Disciple Johnny Appleseed burned to carry this "news straight from Heaven" wherever he went. He would divide a single volume of his favorite into half a dozen parts and leave each part at a cabin. On later visits he would shift the parts, thus bringing the light to many cabins through one volume.

Here might be a typical scene in the year 1820: the log cabin of a settler at the edge of a clearing, surrounded by the first corn crop harvested in the new home. A fire roared up the chimney. Johnny Appleseed, sitting on the hearth, was reading from his Bible. "Blessed are the poor in spirit," he would intone, "for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven." As he read favorite passages far into the night he would earnestly expound the gospel according to his own philosophy. Then, accepting only a quilt, the traveler slept on

the hearth and was gone before the family rose in the morning.

During the War of 1812 the Indians of the Northwest allied themselves with the British and threatened the slaughter of all whites between the Lakes and the Ohio. During all that time Johnny Appleseed tramped his accustomed trails unafraid, safe where others were suffering the tomahawk and the torch. When he learned the plans of the Indians to sweep out of the North he warned the settlers throughout Ohio to flee to the blockhouses. Day and night he traveled, delivering his message.

Once when Johnny Appleseed was at Mansfield word came that the Indians *en masse* were about to attack the town. The nearest troops were at Mount Vernon, 30 miles away, and Johnny Appleseed volunteered to get through for help. Sack-clad and barefooted he set out at sunset. When the sun rose in the morning the troops were in Mansfield and Johnny Appleseed was with them, having covered the 60 miles between suns.

After three decades of planting in Ohio, Johnny Appleseed began to be oppressed by the crowding of the settlements. And, since apple trees that were the children or grandchildren of his early nurseries had been planted throughout 100,000 square miles of Ohio, his work there was done. So he struck west. He labored for a decade in Indiana while the sun of his life slanted to its close.

One day in Fort Wayne a friend told him that, at a point 20 miles distant, the brush fence about one of his nurseries had been broken down and that animals were damaging his trees.

Though he was 72 years old he started forthwith to care for his plant children. Late in the day he came to a cottage in the woods and rested on its doorstep. He accepted bread and butter from the settler's wife and read Beatitudes to her. He accepted a quilt and slept on the hearthstone.

When the settler came in the morning to kindle his fire Johnny Appleseed was unable to rise. He had tramped his last journey.—*Condensed from Coronet.*

AN EVENING PRAYER

WE beseech Thee, Lord, to behold us with favor, folk of many families and nations, gathered together in peace. . . . Be patient still; suffer us awhile longer to endure, and—if it may be—help us to do better. Bless to us our extraordinary mercies. Be with our friends; be with ourselves. Go with each of us to rest; if any awake, temper to them the dark hours of watching; and when the day returns to us, call us up with morning faces and with morning hearts—eager to labor—eager to be happy, if happiness shall be our portion—and if the day be marked for sorrow, strong to endure it.—*Selected.*

A WORKER'S PRAYER

May my hands find some work to do
  In every day;
Some noble service, loving, true,
  To smooth life's way;
And may I all my journey through
  Make work my play.
'Tis good to serve; but oh, 'tis best
  To serve with song;
So may I give at love's request,
  My whole life long
With joy, and find in service rest—
  Where I belong!

BY EVELYN GAGE BROWNE

A teacher giving a lesson on beans asked the children to compose sentences containing the word "beans."

The usual bright boy produced, "My father grows beans," and the usual bright girl was ready with "My mother cooks beans."

Then a little one made this effort, "We are all human beans."—*Tit-Bits.*

Bill: "Since baseball's here again, I got me a baseball dog."

Phil: "What makes you call him a baseball dog?"

Bill: "Because he wears a muzzle, catches flies, chases fowls, and beats it for home when he sees the catcher coming."—*Boy's Life.*

WITH OUR BOYS AND GIRLS

MR. CUCKOO RETIRES

(*Concluded*)

One day the cousins went for a picnic with some neighbors. They were gone all day and when they returned, Grandma Robbins looked very sober. She pointed to the apple tree. There was poor Jenny Wren in a perfect temper. She flew in and out, scolding violently. Mr. Wren looked scared and upset.

"Something must have got their eggs, I guess."

Grandma set a plate of ginger cookies on the table.

"Come, supper's ready now, dearies."

But the children felt too sad to even enjoy ginger cookies.

"Cheer up, lamikins, Grandpa will see what he can do after supper. Eat now, like good children."

Pretty soon Mr. and Mrs. Wren flew away. Grandpa got a ladder and Roger climbed up and peeked in. Sure enough, there were no eggs there.

"What could have taken them, Grandpa?" Lois was almost crying.

"Well, it might have been a bigger bird of some kind. You see that opening is large enough so a big bird could reach his bill in and steal the eggs. Might have been a bluejay. They're great mischief makers, you know.

"Sh-sh-sh! Here come the wrens back!"

Grandfather and the children dodged into the barn.

Just as if they had talked it over and decided on a plan, Jenny went inside at once and her mate took up his old post on the branch nearby.

Next morning there was another burst of song, and for several days Jenny stayed in the nest and Mr. Wren hovered about anxiously, singing once in a while to keep up their courage. The children were sure there must be more eggs in the nest.

"I declare, it's too bad that such faithfulness as that should be wasted."

Grandma was sweeping the back porch and Lois was washing dishes while Roger dried them.

"If that old bluejay gets those eggs again I'll just cry, that's all there is to it," Lois flicked soapsuds about recklessly.

"Well, what can we do about it?" Roger polished a glass till there wasn't a speck on it.

"Wish there was some way to keep him out."

Suddenly Lois clapped her soapy hands. Suds flew in all directions.

"I know. Let's make the hole smaller!"

"We couldn't without handling the clock case and the birds probably wouldn't go near it after that," objected Roger.

"That's so," Lois' face fell.

"Couldn't you make the hole smaller from the outside, some way, without taking it down?" Grandma paused in the doorway, broom in hand.

"Maybe." Roger thought a minute.

"Perhaps we could cut a piece of cardboard to fit the front of the case with the hole only big enough for the wrens. But how could we keep it there?"

"Thumb tacks!" fairly shouted Lois, smiles breaking out again.

"That's the idea. And here they are."

Grandma took a small box from the old desk.

"And here's cardboard and here are shears. Now I guess we'll fix Mr. Bluejay," she laughed.

The little false door was soon made and now began the watch for a chance to tack it up.

"It's a good thing the ladder is still there," whispered Lois.

"There won't be any time to lose when they do go away. Now! There they go. Hurry!"

Roger almost ran up the ladder and fastened the cardboard in place. He took time to peer into the nest and could just make out four wee white things in the dimness, inside.

"Now suppose they won't go back. Wouldn't that be awful, Roger?"

"Sh-sh-sh! Here they come!"

Mr. and Mrs. Wren lighted on the "singing branch," as Lois called it, and talked over the new front door.

"Seems very strange, Jenny," said he (maybe).

"I should say so. Must be because we're getting old, Father," said she (perhaps). "Anyhow, I've got to keep those eggs warm," and in she popped.

The children went to bed happy that night.

Next morning, such a racket! Not much like Mr. Wren's usual sweet serenade. Such squawks and squeaks! Sounds such as a rusty pump makes, or a wheelbarrow that needs oiling.

Roger and Lois rushed to the window. There stood Mr. Bluejay and Mr. Wren. And—how—they—did—talk! Grandmother told Grandfather she was glad they couldn't understand bird language.

Mr. Jay kept trying to poke his head into the nest but the new front door was too small and he only got pecked sharply each time by the indignant little person inside. Poor Jenny Wren quite forgot to be a lady! The things she said! U-m-m-m-m! And the way she nipped at Mr. Jay's saucy head, while little Mr. Wren beset him from the rear!

No wonder Mr. Jay soon got tired of the noisy one-sided quarrel and flew off squawking like a fish horn with a bad cold; whereupon Jenny went calmly back to her housewifely duties as if nothing had happened and Mr. Wren hopped on to the "singing branch" and told the whole world all about it in song.

"Well, I should think the old clock must be happy to have a real bird living in it instead of a wooden one," said Lois when the excitement was all over.

"Yes, and I'll bet Mr. Cuckoo is glad he retired, too," added Roger, and he put the tiny wooden bird on the mantel corner, where it seemed contented and very much at home.—*Courtesy of The Beacon.*

First Student: "I wonder how old Miss Jones is."

Second Student: "Quite old, I imagine; they say she used to teach Caesar."
—*Exchange.*

LEAFY RUGS

When school for children has begun,
It's time for leaves to have their fun;
From their tree homes they flutter down,
Some dressed in red and some in brown.
Whichever way the wind may blow,
It makes them glad as off they go;
If over roofs or under eaves,
Still they are joyous dancing leaves.
They spread their skirts out in the sun,
Then rustle them as off they run,
Sometimes a leafy rug they lay,
Where children come and like to play.

—Emilie Blackmore Stapp
in *Christian Science Monitor.*

ANSWERS TO OCTOBER PUZZLES

Enigma:

Charles and Anne

Twisted Names of Countries:

1. France
2. Italy
3. Germany
4. Austria
5. Hungary
6. Switzerland
7. Belgium
8. Holland
9. Scotland
10. Norway

It was the grammar lesson, and the teacher was explaining the difference between a common and an abstract noun. "An example of a common noun is 'dog,'" she said, "for you can see a dog, but you cannot see anything that is in the abstract. For instance, have any of you ever seen 'abundance'?"

There was silence for a few moments. Then a little boy got up and said, "Please, ma'am, I have never seen a bun dance, but I have seen a cake walk."—*Clipped.*

NURSEMAID

By Ruth Melick Griffith

The wind is a nursemaid,
Rocking the trees,
Till all the wee cradles
Sway in the breeze.

While mothers are flying,
Birdies sleep there.
Who but the wind could give
Such gentle care?

LIFE

If you get blue and things seem hard,
Just go out in your own dooryard
  And hear a robin trill,
  And see a flower, until
You feel lighthearted as a singing bard.

Or ride clear up to the very top
Of yonder hill, then park and stop.
  Tall mountains rise to view,
  Green prairies, blue sky, too.
You'll feel this life-renewing, sturdy prop.

Or better yet, ride up the stream
That roars down canyon walls. You seem
  To get its power and thrill.
  You drink and drink your fill
Of life. You get its pattern and its theme.

—Ella Waterbury Gardner in "Boy Life."

A couple of sailors were seated at a table in a café. One sailor had a letter before him and was reading aloud, while at the same time the other sailor held his hands over the reader's ears. A friendly waiter, impelled by curiosity, paused before the table.

"Why," the waiter asked, "do you hold your hands over your friend's ears while he reads that letter out loud to you?"

"Because," was the dignified answer, "the letter is from my sweetheart. Jack is reading it because I can't read myself. That is all right, but I don't want him to hear a word of what's in the letter."—*Clipped.*

"If you are good, Richie, I'll give you this bright new penny."

"Haven't you got a dirty old nickel?"

—The Humorist (London).

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE

Miss Anna E. Sibley, *Chairman,* 82 Browne Street, Brookline, Mass.
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Meetings at 25 Beacon Street, Boston, at 10.30 A.M. the first Friday of each month from October to May inclusive.

ITS PURPOSE

To cheer and comfort those who are ill, lonely, or discouraged, and to give to those living far from a church some of the inspiration of the printed word by the publication of one good sermon, or similar article in each issue of the *Cheerful Letter Magazine.* Only such simple religious truths and principles as are agreed upon by all churches are printed.

To help those who live far from schools, or who wish to continue their studies by means of correspondence with a teacher.

To establish Circulating Libraries in isolated communities, schools, and colleges in rural and mountain districts where public libraries and other educational privileges are not available.

WHERE TO WRITE

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